

Strasbourg, 24 October 2025

EPAS(2025)76

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport

Meeting of the EPAS Bureau

**Wednesday 22 October 2025
9.00am – 11.00am CET**

**Hybrid
(online on the Zoom platform and
in Strasbourg, Palais de l'Europe, meeting room no.16)**

Working language: English

REPORT

Participants

Governing Board (GB): Solène Charuau (France, Chair), Ioanna Paraskevopoulou (Cyprus, Vice-Chair), Elnur Mammadov (Azerbaijan, Member), Simon De Coster (Belgium, Member), Antonio Parrilla (Italy, member), Florian Botto (Monaco, MSL19), Michael Landau (Monaco, MSL19)

Consultative Committee (CC): Charlotte Girard-Fabre (IFSO, Chair), Mogens Kirkeby (ISCA, Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Marija Jurčević (Croatia, Member)

Secretariat: Stanislas Frossard (Executive Secretary of EPAS), Francine Hetherington Raveney (Deputy Executive Secretary of EPAS), Elena Casero (Programme Manager), Caroline Larghi (Administrative Assistant), Oren Kenny (Trainee)

1. Welcome

The Chair, Solène Charuau, opened the meeting and welcomed the on-site and online participants.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda EPAS(2025)75 was adopted without any amendments (see Appendix).

The Chair requested the addition of an item under item 12. AOB: feedback on the consultation on the European Sport Model launched by the European Commission (EC), and on EPAS' contribution to the debates.

3. Diversity Conference (20/10/25): feedback and follow up

Francine Hetherington Raveney gave an update on the Conference, which took place in a hybrid format (on site in Strasbourg and online) on Tuesday 21 October 2025. The event ran very smoothly. The three panels were very well structured and offered a rich content. The Secretariat received positive feedback from the Governing Board and the Consultative Committee. There was an interesting presentation of walking football at lunchtime and the possibility to practice was given to participants.

The Secretariat was disappointed that only about 40 persons followed the event online, whereas around 150 persons had registered. The Bureau suggested, for future events, to send a meeting request to all registered participants, so they have the event in their calendars. A reminder could also be sent out a couple of days before the event. The

Bureau also asked if an automatic registration confirmation could be sent to registered participants, which is not the case with the form currently used.

Mogens Kirkeby regretted that the interventions were mainly oral ones (with a few visual presentations), which is not very appealing, especially for online participants.

The conference was organised in a week in which many international big events were taking place in the sport world (COP10, IPACS Annual General Conference, 4th International Forum on Sport Integrity, among others.). The Executive Secretary suggested to come back on the results of the conference at the next Bureau meeting or plenary meeting in May 2026 to consider possible follow up and trigger further actions and initiatives.

Antonio Parrilla stated that an official invitation letter from the EPAS Secretariat would help to obtain the internal authorisation to travel, as it can be difficult for the EPAS delegates to share the information on the basis of a programme and a concept note only. Stanislas Frossard proposed to pass the information via the Permanent representations, and to send an official individual letter at least to the delegates who have not registered.

Ioanna Paraskevopoulou invited the Secretariat to put the intergenerational dimension of sport on the agenda of the plenary meeting in May 2026 and to invite the member states to share their best practices in this area.

4. Consultative Committee: feedback on the CC Bureau meeting on 20/10/25

A CC Bureau meeting took place in Strasbourg on Monday 20 October 2025 in the afternoon in hybrid format (Strasbourg and online). It was well attended, and there were lively discussions on the way the CC could serve the GB in terms of policy advice. The general idea is that the CC's contribution could be better organised, for instance through working groups on specific subjects in order to give more developed input to the GB. It was noted that the atmosphere was very good and friendly for the moment; this atmosphere should be mutualised to better support the GB.

An update was given on the new applications as the CC is to be expanded from 30 to 35 members, but this has not been further proceeded with for the time being.

5. Meeting of the Statutory Committee (12/11/25): identification of possible speakers on mental health (athletes)

The Statutory Committee (SC) meeting will bring together the 41 Permanent Representatives of EPAS member states in Strasbourg on 12 November in the morning to approve the budget and the programme of activities.

An extended session will be organised with the representatives of those member states which are part of the Council of Europe, but not of EPAS. The aim is to have a lively debate with some high-level figures in the sports world and a more academic approach. This year's edition will focus on mental health in sport. Stanislas Frossard informed the Bureau that the Secretariat is looking for an athlete and an expert; various leads exist including the University of Strasbourg regarding the expert, but the Secretariat would like to find an athlete first ensuring, if possible, geographic diversity:

- At the CC Bureau meeting on 20 October Andrej Pisl (EUSA) proposed Fabian Hambüchen, multiple Olympic World and European champion, who is retired and currently a German spokesperson advocating for mental health.
- Elena Casero had some contacts in Spain, as it would be interesting to have a speaker from a non-EPAS member state.
- Solène Charuau offered to put the Secretariat in contact with Christophe Lemaitre, a French athlete living in Mulhouse who speaks about mental health and sport.
- The EPAS Secretariat has some leads from mental health experts based locally.

6. International Partnership on corruption in sport (IPACS): update

Stanislas Frossard informed the attendees that the 8th IPACS Annual General Conference was due to take place in Lausanne on 23 October. The following countries had registered to take part: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, United Kingdom and Switzerland. He recalled that the EPAS Secretariat had provided an update on IPCAS to all interested GB members on 13 October 2025.

Latvia and Türkiye also showed an interest in participating in the 8th General Conference. The Secretariat will make sure the participants from these two countries are put in contact with the GB representatives and are knowledgeable about what EPAS is doing in the field of promotion of good governance and integrity of sport.

Stanislas Frossard would like the EPAS Secretariat to focus on the taskforce on good governance in sports organisations. He added that the Secretariat is about to publish the handbook for sports organisations on the implementation of the good governance benchmark, but the main concern remains to cascade down these elements and to activate the organisations to trigger analyses, evaluations and reforms on the implementation of these good governance principles.

A discussion shall take place at the next GB meeting to come up with proposals supported by the Council of Europe. This work is connected with the work of the Working Group on good governance. The Secretariat suggested to make a mapping of those countries and sports organisations which are actively implementing and enhancing their governance. The Secretariat wants to be informed about the different initiatives from the sports movement either via the international federations or the national Olympic committees and from the governments, and to develop support activities. For the time being two

seminars are organised per year, alongside the support and follow-up visits on the European Sports Charter. The next one could take place in Luxembourg in January 2026. This is a good initiative and one that is appreciated by the IPACS partners, but more can be done.

7. EPAS Forum on Sport and Human Rights (16/12/25) focusing on mental health and women's health in sport: update

Francine Hetherington Raveney thanked Mogens Kirkeby for his valuable practical input regarding the programme of the Diversity Conference and noted that more visual presentations would be incorporated into the programme of the Forum to keep the attention of those participating, especially online.

The Forum will take place on Tuesday 16 December in the Council of Europe Paris office and online. The overall subject area is health and well-being and the two sub areas are "women's health and sport" and "mental health in sport". There will be three panels covering these subject areas during the morning webinar and the list of speakers is being developed with useful input from both the GB and the CC.

In the afternoon there will be two workshops, one on "women's physical health and sport" and the other one on "mental health and well-being in sport".

One of the aims of the forum is to prepare insights into the upcoming joint EU-CoE project "Equal and Active" looking into women's health in sport across the generations. The project is still under negotiation with the European Commission.

The registration form for the forum will be sent out shortly and a meeting request will be sent to all registered participants.

Charlotte Girard Fabre added that, if mental health concerns athletes, it also concerns referees, who can be victims of violence and abuse amongst other areas. She offered her help in identifying speakers amongst her network of sports officials.

Antonio Parrilla proposed a speaker working in the area of promoting good mental health through sport in Italy.

8. First meeting of the Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance (17/12/25)

The key preparatory documents were shared, together with the list of members and the terms of reference of the Working Group (WG). The study conducted by Clémentine Legendre was also disseminated. First, the Group will brainstorm on who could be the Chair of the WG. It should be a member of the GB. The member states parties to the WG include Austria, Denmark, France, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Portugal,

Slovenia, and Türkiye. The Chair should be from a non-EU country to avoid confusion with the discussions that are taking place at EU level. The Vice-Chair should be from the GB as well according to the terms of reference.

Michael Landau stated that most of the non-EU states are small states, so not really available. Such a position would put a lot of strain on them. Besides, he recalled that it would be favourable to hold hybrid meetings, as the member states receive too many invitations for physical meetings, which makes it difficult for small countries to attend.

The first meeting will exceptionally take place physically as the Secretariat thought it would help to elect the Chair and define the working schedule. The next ones will be online.

Simon de Coster approved the idea of having a Chair from a non-EU country to avoid overlaps.

Caroline Dollet mentioned that ENGSO had informed the Secretariat that Sara Massini will not be their Secretary General as of 27 October. She will be replaced at ENGSO by Theo Neyenhuis. However, Theo Neyenhuis will not be able to replace her in the WG. According to the terms of reference of the WG, a new call for candidacies shall be issued.

The schedule foresees that the two recommendations are updated by the end of 2027. The number of meetings to be held shall be discussed at the launch meeting.

9. Working Group on the European Sports Charter (ESC)

Solène Charuau explained that the WG had been set up two years ago and that its mandate was coming to a close. Its aim had been to help the evaluation team be better prepared for support and follow-up visits for the ESC. A questionnaire had been designed which had been sent to the host country prior to the visit. This survey appeared to have been very helpful. The next step is to extend this questionnaire to all countries to gather information on the way EPAS member states implement the ESC. The WG was set up in May 2025. Its last meeting could take place in January 2026 to decide what to do with the information that has been collected.

10. 19th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport (Monaco, 3-4/11/26)

The Secretariat shall schedule the different side events of the conference as soon as possible as the Monaco authorities have to conclude the different contracts with the Fairmont hotel, where the delegations will be accommodated. The current schedule was drawn up on the basis of the one created for the Porto Conference in 2024.

Stanislas Frossard proposed three scenarios for the upcoming conference and side events:

Scenario 1: 10th anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention in the morning of 3 November, followed by the meeting of senior officials, which will finetune the resolutions, and then by the restricted gathering of EPAS ministers. The conference itself would take place on 4 November with the 2 sessions + the gala dinner. This scenario is fine to gather the TS4 community only, but not ministers, whereas the Secretariat's interest is to reach participants beyond the Convention committee.

Scenario 2: meeting of senior officials on 3 November in the morning, followed by 10th anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention and then by the welcome dinner. With this scenario, all senior officials would have to arrive on 2 November in the evening. This would imply higher accommodation costs for EPAS (10 000€) and the Monaco authorities (2500€), and we would not be sure more ministers would attend the anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention.

Scenario 3: meeting of senior officials on 3 November at 2pm (till 3.30pm), followed by the 10th anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention (4pm to 6.30pm); in this case the senior officials could attend the anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention before heading to the welcome dinner. The restricted gathering of EPAS ministers would take place on 4 November at the end of the conference, and a drink would be held before the gala dinner. This would ensure the presence of all EPAS' ministers at the restricted gathering.

This third scenario is a combination of the Saint-Denis Secretariat's request and Monaco's and EPAS' constraints.

Ioanna Paraskevopoulou and Antonio Parrilla were in favour of scenario 3.

Florian Botto expressed Monaco's preference for scenario 2, as three nights were covered in Porto as well. Monaco wants a good visibility for the Saint-Denis anniversary and the possibility for other countries to join the celebration. Scenario 3 raised some preoccupations on Monaco's side as the Saint-Denis Convention team had expressed their wish for a longer celebration to look at the achievements over a decade and at future perspectives for the Convention. With scenario 2, ministers could arrive on 3 November in the morning, go to the Saint-Denis event and stay for the conference and the gala dinner on 4 November. On 3 November, Monaco is offering a welcome dinner at 8pm. There could be a signature ceremony at the beginning of the welcome dinner.

It was agreed that the fact that ministers cannot stay for 3 nights had to be taken into account (ministers usually arrive late and depart right after the end of the conference) and that the budget shall not be the main issue. Lessons have to be learnt from previous editions. The programme shall not be the same at each conference. The intense traffic between Nice airport and Monaco shall be taken into account as well. It is very difficult

to circulate in the morning, whereas the traffic is lighter at lunch time. Monaco agreed to further consult internally and to come back to the Secretariat. A compromise solution will be presented at the next meeting.

Michael Landau enquired about a possible Youth event on the sidelines of the conference. Monaco would be happy to get some advice and the input from the Bureau. According to the Reykjavik declaration, a bigger role has to be given to youth in designing policies and this is mainstreamed in all areas of the Council of Europe. However, the Secretariat does have some flexibility to reach this goal.

11. Update on child safeguarding:

Implementation of “Start to Talk” in Cyprus – First round table (31/10/25)

Elena Casero explained that the round table will be held in the framework of the implementation of the project in 2025, following the rolling out of a national campaign organised in 2024. EPAS and the Cyprus Sports Organisation are working in close co-operation to organise the round table. Four pilot sports associations had been identified; EPAS is helping them to implement the Cyprus sports Organisation legal and policy framework on child safeguarding in sport.

At the round table in Nicosia on 31 October, there will be a discussion on the basic safeguarding elements EPAS has decided to work on after having identified the needs of the sports associations. The discussion will address, among other topics, safer recruitment in sport and reporting systems. The guidelines on safer recruitment in sport adopted by the GB are very useful in this context. The work of international and European sports organisations will also be discussed at the round table.

Annual meeting of the Pool of international experts on safe sport (13-14/11/25)

An in-camera meeting will take place on 13 November to discuss the functioning, the internal procedures and the deliverables of the Pool.

On 14 November there will be an open seminar, organised in cooperation with the French National and Sports Olympic Committee (CNOSF). Members of French sports associations are invited to participate in person. The seminar will be open to a broader audience for online participation. The aim of the seminar is to take leverage of the expertise of the Pool to support these associations to implement the safeguarding elements and procedures.

Tools development

The guidelines on safer recruitment were adopted by the EPAS Governing Board in July. A pre-edited version is available on the “Start to Talk” web page and the post-edited version will be available soon. These guidelines have proven useful for implementing the “Start to Talk” project, as in the case of Cyprus.

Currently, the Secretariat is working on the update of a previous training kit on how to prevent and react to sexual violence against children in sport (developed in the framework the “Pro Safe Sport+” project in 2017). It was decided that the training kit should focus on sexual violence rather than broaden its scope, in order to maintain its practicality and user-friendliness, and to prevent the specifics of sexual violence from being overlooked if the subject is extended.

The Secretariat is also working on the development of a module on child safeguarding in sport within the HELP course. The English version will be ready by the end of the year, thanks to the voluntary contribution of Monaco. It will be translated into French soon. All of the safeguarding tools currently being developed by “Start to Talk”, including the guidelines on safer recruitment in sport, the HELP module on child safeguarding and the training kit, will contribute to the work presented at the ministerial conference in Monaco in November 2026.

12. Any other business

Stanislas Frossard had an exchange with the European Commission regarding the consultation on the European Sport Model launched by the Commission, and on a possible extra contribution of the Council of Europe to the debates. He will prepare a short summary to be presented at the next meeting of the GB Bureau.

Mogens Kirkeby mentioned that ISCA is organising its MOVE congress in Copenhagen from 29 to 31 October 2025. 800 people have registered, among them 200 organisations. Cassandra Mactavish will speak at the session on the European Sport Model. The former Head of the Sport unit of the EC, Jaime Andreu, and the current one, Giorgio Guazzugli Marini, will speak and there will be an open discussion about the process.

As several groups of young people will take part in the congress, ISCA would be happy to help the Monaco authorities get in touch with young people to design the Youth side-event at the ministerial conference.

13. Date and place of the next meeting

The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting online on 18 November 2025 at 1pm.

Appendix: Agenda

1.	Welcome	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	EPAS(2025)75
3.	Diversity Conference ➤ Feedback and follow up	EPAS(2025)30
4.	Consultative Committee ➤ Feedback on the meeting of the CC Bureau on 20/10/25 in Strasbourg	
5.	Meeting of the Statutory Committee (12 Nov. 25) ➤ Identification of possible speakers on mental health (athletes)	
6.	International Partnership on corruption in sport (IPACS) ➤ Update	
7.	EPAS Human Rights Forum - focus on mental health and women's health in sport ➤ Update	EPAS(2025)66
8.	First meeting of the Working Group on the Autonomy of Sport and Good Governance, Paris (FIA), 17 Dec. 25	EPAS(2025)73
9.	Working Group on the European Sports Charter	
10.	19 th CoE Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport, Monaco, 3-4 November 2026 ➤ Scheduling of the different meetings (10 th anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention, meeting of senior officials, EPAS restricted ministerial gathering)	T-S4(2025)25
11.	Update on child safeguarding ➤ Implementation of "Start to Talk" in Cyprus – 1 st round table, 31 October, Nicosia ➤ Annual meeting of the Pool of international experts on safe sport, 13-14 November, Paris ➤ Tools development	EPAS(2025)64 EPAS(2025)65
12.	Any other business	
13.	Date and place of the next meeting	